

Romans: The Integrity of God
"I Don't Know, and I Don't Care"
The Awful Condition of a Reprobate
Romans 8:28-32

Our previous study defined a reprobate as *"one who is disapproved of by God."* In the final analysis, we said that a reprobate is one who does not turn from his sin. Remember the definition of a reprobate since *professing Christians* and **reprobates** often look alike!

(1). You can't necessarily distinguish between them by their conduct.

David committed murder and adultery and yet *"had a heart after God."*

(2). You can ultimately distinguish them by their confession.

A believer will find himself struggling against his sin, seeking to turn from his sin, and always, eventually, turning from His sin to His Lord. A reprobate seeks the hand of God (blessings) but never really seeks God Himself. The Bible calls the sorrow of the reprobate *"a worldly sorrow that leads to death"* (II Cor. 7:10). The elect have within themselves a *"godly sorrow that leads to genuine repentance"* (II Cor. 7:10).

(3). You must know that God has a purpose for both the elect and the reprobate.

God purposely saves His own, but He purposefully uses a reprobate (i.e., Pharaoh). Since reprobation is God *"turning people over to themselves"* or in essence, saying of them, *"I shall withhold saving grace,"* how can He hold accountable the reprobate?

I. The reprobate throws off his natural knowledge of God.

"They did not like to retain God in their knowledge . . ." (v.28). God, in grace that is common to all mankind, deposits a natural knowledge of His power and existence. *"For the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, his power and Godhead (person) so that they are without excuse"* (v.20). The Greek word echo ("retain") means *"to have."* They did not like having God in their thoughts. So rather than having God at the center they replaced Him with self.

II. The reprobate thinks, then acts according to his thinking.

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). He begins to do those things that are not *"fitting"* (convenient – Acts 22:22). Not fitting for a human being, created by God, to do in this life. Twenty-one things are mentioned in this text: The **NIV** list: *Being filled with* (a Gk. perfect participle --- a past action with present consequences) *every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant, and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are SENSELESS, FAITHLESS, HEARTLESS, RUTHLESS.*

III. The reprobate thirsts to be around people who do the same things.

"Who, knowing the judgment of God . . . have pleasure in them that do them" (v.29). We have seen a world that has deteriorated since the garden of Eden. We speak of advancement, but the truth is decay. And it is all traced back to a common human problem ---- ***I don't know God and I don't care to know Him.*** You say, that's right preacher, preach on! Be careful that you don't judge! *"Thou art inexcusable!"* (2:1).

The New International Version List of Twenty-One Sins of Reprobates

- (1). **Every kind of wickedness** --- this is sin in general; injustice in particular. Perverting what is right and withholding what is due. Everything that follows is encompassed here.
- (2). **Evil** --- this is malice cherished in the heart and acted out in the life. Satan himself is called "*the evil one*" (Matthew 13:19 NIV).
- (3). **Greed** --- (covetousness KJV) an eagerness and a thirst for money and things. The Pharisees were guilty of this type of greed under the cloak of religion (Luke 16:14).
- (4). **Depravity** --- translated "*maliciousness*" in the KJV. It is a disposition to inflict injury and take revenge. Nero set fire to Rome and charged it on the Christians.
- (5). **Envy** --- it is being bothered by another person possessing that which we do not own ourselves. Envy withers at another's joy, and hates the excellence it cannot reach.
- (6). **Murder** --- whether legalized or forbidden. It has been at times lawful throughout history for the slaughter of people due to race or religion. This is a mark of reprobation.
- (7). **Strife** --- this means argumentative. It is the exercise of debate with words, not for truth, but for selfish pride. It is the product of self-importance.
- (8). **Deceit** --- this simply means lying. It is the common practice of reprobates to twist and misrepresent the truth, as well as to outright fabricate a lie.
- (9). **Malice** --- This is the desire to do evil or harm, cloaked by friendliness. It goes hand in hand with lying.
- (10). **They are gossips** --- this is translated "whisperers" in the KJV and has the idea of speaking evil of others in secret.
- (11). **They are slanderers** --- the same as gossips except the slanderer does not care if he is heard by the one he is inflicting injury upon or not.
- (12). **They are God-haters** --- enemies of God in heart and deed. They are opposed to His Lordship. This hatred is rooted in an evil nature and aggravated by guilt and dread.
- (13). **They are insolent** --- this means to treat people of less authority, popularity, status, and prestige with disdain. This was the ordinary bearing of Roman masters to slaves.
- (14). **They are arrogant** --- elated with superiority over others. This, again, was the known character of most Romans. This belief in general superiority leads to disdain.
- (15). **They are boastful** --- this is arrogance in the tongue, insolence in the manners. It is the outward manifestation of pride and arrogance.
- (16). **They invent ways of doing evil** --- or inventors of new ways of sinning and creative ways to cause suffering in others. Clever in devising evil.
- (17). **They disobey their parents** --- the fifth commandment is one of the laws of nature, ingrained within the heart of all humans. Reprobates turn from this law.
- (18). **They are senseless** --- or literally "without understanding." They are led not by reason but by passion. There is no one who understands the things of God.
- (19). **They are faithless** --- in that their word is no good. They make vows, but break them, they make promises and don't keep them.
- (20). **They are heartless** --- or "without natural affection" which simply means there is no love for family, both as parents and children. Calvin took this to mean infanticide.
- (21). **They are ruthless** --- without mercy, cruel, unforgiving to those around them.

Two words in the KJV are not in many manuscripts: fornication (v.29 "*sexual impurity*") and implacable (v.31 similar to "*ruthless*"). Fornication is already listed in Romans 1:24,26.